

Clean Air Act 112(r) Newsletter

Risk Management Plan Update



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10

September 2005

Is your 5-year Risk Management Plan due?

Updated risk management plans are now due for many facilities that generate, use, and/or store hazardous chemicals. Facilities with hazardous chemicals above threshold amounts are required to develop:

- An off-site consequence analysis;
- An accident prevention program; and
- An emergency response program.

The program originally required existing facilities to submit their risk management plans to EPA in June 1999. The plans must be updated and resubmitted at least every five years. Many of these plans have been resubmitted and some are now overdue.

Over 480 facilities in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington are required to maintain risk management programs (RMPs). These facilities include cold storage warehouses; seafood processors; fertilizer manufacturers and distributors; water and wastewater treatment plants; and paper, chemical and metal industries.

Why a 5-year update?

Updated risk management plans help ensure that hazardous chemicals continue to be handled in a safe manner, and reduce the risk of disastrous releases by providing vital emergency response information. Risk management program facilities must fully update and resubmit their risk management plans every five years. You can find information and resources to update your risk management plan on the Region 10 website at www.epa.gov/r10earth/112r.htm.

Did You Know? Since June 1999, 15% of Region 10 facilities have been able to deregister by changing to a less hazardous chemical or changing their process to require a lower than threshold amount of the RMP-regulated substance. To find out more about deregistration, visit www.epa.gov/r10earth/112r.htm and click on “Resources for submission and deregistration.”

What happens if you do not submit an updated plan or your program isn't complete?

EPA's inspection program has been steadily increasing over the past few years. Inspectors are now reviewing Risk Management Programs and their supporting documentation at facilities throughout the Northwest.

Last spring, several RMP facilities in Washington, Oregon and Alaska paid monetary penalties because their risk management programs did not meet regulatory requirements. The facilities include seafood processors, cold food storage, chemical manufacturing and distribution, and a wastewater treatment plant. These facilities have since corrected the problems.

EPA has recently initiated several enforcement actions that address the failure to resubmit a risk management plan or failure to resubmit by the 5-year anniversary date. The penalties assessed in these cases ranged from \$30,617 to \$77,000. For example:

- In February, EPA settled a case against the City and Borough of Juneau, Alaska for failure to submit a risk management plan for their use of chlorine and sulfur dioxide at the city's Mendenhall Wastewater Treatment Plant. They have since changed their process to use ultra-violet radiation and have phased out the use of all RMP-regulated chemicals in that facility.
- In January, EPA also settled cases with West Farm Foods and Primeland Cooperatives for failure to submit risk management plans.

The purpose of the RMP is to eliminate or minimize the effects of accidental chemical releases; therefore, EPA considers the failure to submit a risk management plan a very serious issue.

For information on program compliance, visit our website at <http://www.epa.gov/r10earth/112r.htm>.

Other things to consider when updating your plan

Several RMP facilities in the region have opened their doors to local fire departments and emergency planning committees to conduct drills. These activities promote better communication between facilities and their communities, and help ensure that everyone is ready to handle an accident should one occur.

The RMP is not only about the facilities that participate, but it is about the communities that risk management plans help to protect. Together we are doing our best to prevent any accidental releases from affecting the health and safety of our communities. You can find your Local Emergency Planning Committee online at www.epa.gov/swercepp/lepclist.htm.

HazMat Explo⁹

November 14-17, 2005
Orleans Hotel & Casino
Las Vegas, Nevada

The ninth annual HazMat Explo will be in Las Vegas this November! The conference provides training for people involved in emergency response, such as grant-writers, volunteer fire fighters, and emergency planners. This year's conference includes a variety of courses on public safety and emergency response as well as tours of Yucca Mountain and the Nevada Test Site. Early-bird registration ends October 10th!

Registration and course info is available at www.hazmatexplo.org

Risk Management Program Basics and Techniques

April 3-6, 2006
811 SW 6th - Department of Environmental Quality
Portland, Oregon

Join us for our one-day Basics course or stay all week and include the three-day Techniques course. EPA staff will discuss new regulatory requirements, the inspection and enforcement program, and how to resubmit a risk management plan. RMP facilities, Local Emergency Response Committees, State and Local Governments, Tribes, Public Health Organizations, Fire and Hazmat Departments, and Law Enforcement Operations are invited to attend free of charge.

For course and registration info, visit www.epa.gov/r10earth/112r.htm, and then click on "Conferences and Events."

QUESTIONS? Please contact:

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For people with disabilities, please call Kelly Huynh with requests for reasonable accommodation. TTY users, please call 800-877-8339.